

Claims

- [c1] A method for processing a postage refund request for a mail piece comprising:
 - receiving a refund request including a tracking identifier from a user system;
 - determining if the refund request is valid; and
 - if the refund request is valid, processing the refund request, wherein,
 - the determination of whether the refund request is valid includes determining whether the tracking identifier has been observed in a mail stream.
- [c2] The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 - if the refund request is not valid, initiating a refund error process.
- [c3] The method of claim 2 wherein:
 - the refund error process includes a fraud inquiry.
- [c4] The method of claim 3 wherein:
 - the refund error process includes notifying a postal authority.
- [c5] The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 - determining if the mail piece is associated with the user

that submitted the refund request.

- [c6] The method of claim 4 further comprising:
determining if a refund test period has completed; and
if the refund test period is not completed, performing
another determination of whether the mail piece has
been observed in the mail stream.
- [c7] The method of claim 3 wherein:
the tracking identifier includes a 22-digit delivery confir-
mation PIC code.
- [c8] The method of claim 3 wherein:
the tracking identifier includes a PLANET code and a
POSTNET code.
- [c9] The method of claim 3 wherein:
the tracking identifier includes a postage meter serial
number and a postage meter postage ascending register
value.
- [c10] The method of claim 3 wherein:
the tracking identifier includes a postal ID tag.
- [c11] The method of claim 1 wherein:
the refund request includes a user selection from a list of
mail pieces.
- [c12] The method of claim 1 wherein:

the refund request is received from the user via a postage broker.

- [c13] The method of claim 6 wherein:
the refund test period is one week.
- [c14] The method of claim 6 wherein:
the refund test period is variable.
- [c15] The method of claim 14 wherein:
the variable length of the refund test period depends upon the class of service of the mail piece.
- [c16] The method of claim 1 wherein:
processing the refund request includes aggregating a group of valid refund request associated with a postage broker.
- [c17] The method of claim 1 wherein:
processing the refund request includes aggregating a group of valid refund requests and sending a group refund request associated with the aggregated group of valid refund request to a postal authority.
- [c18] The method of claim 16, further comprising:
sending aggregated refund request data to the postage broker.